



Department of State

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A Monkey on Tennessee's Back: The Scopes Trial in Dayton

The Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) in Nashville will open its new exhibit, "A Monkey on Tennessee's Back: The Scopes Trial in Dayton," on June 1, 2007. The exhibit will probe the history behind the famous Scopes Trial, a court case that received national attention as attorney Clarence Darrow battled William Jennings Bryan on behalf of a Rhea County teacher's decision - prompted by the ACLU's quest to find a biology teacher to challenge the newly passed Butler Act - to teach evolution.

Without a doubt, the question, "where do humans come from?" was asked long before Charles Darwin published *Origin of Species* in 1859. Yet throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, the debate amongst members of the scientific and religious communities has continued to be a divisive and widely debated topic. The Scopes "Monkey" Trial is perhaps one of the critical events of this controversy and one of the landmark legal decisions of the twentieth century. Through this exhibit, we will consider the debate over evolution versus creationism from its beginnings to the present, but our focus will be the trial that took place during the hot summer months of 1925 in the small town of Dayton, Tennessee.

This exhibit will run through December 31, 2007. The Tennessee State Library and Archives is located downtown at 403 7th Avenue North, across from the State Capitol. The exhibit is free and open to the public. Limited street parking is available for visitors near the archives building.

For further information about the exhibit, contact Ashley Via-Rhodes at 615-253-3457.